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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 15, 2008

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Community Health Centers Receive \$1 million to Improve Healthcare for Idahoans

The Department of Health and Welfare's new Community Health Center Grant Program has awarded seven grants to improve healthcare for Idahoans across the state. Benewah Medical Center, Dirne Community Health Center, Family Health Services of Twin Falls and Burley, Glenns Ferry Health Center, Health West in Pocatello, Terry Reilly Health Services in the Treasure Valley, and Upper Valley Community Health Services in St. Anthony were selected to receive grants totaling \$1 million. The primary focus for this year's grants was improving access for dental healthcare.

The Idaho Community Health Center Grant Program was established in 2007 and funded by the 2008 Legislature to provide grants to Community Health Centers to improve access to healthcare. Community Health Center grants are limited to \$500,000, with no project funded by the grant for longer than one year. As specified by the Legislature, preference for the current awards was given to applicants that proposed to purchase dental equipment.

"These grants provide our Community Health Centers with a resource to help overcome the barriers that limit healthcare access in Idaho," said Mary Sheridan, Supervisor of the State Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. "The Community Health Center Grant Program allows applicants the flexibility to design activities and programs that work best in their own communities."

The individual grants include:

- Family Health Services was awarded \$193,000 to purchase dental equipment to establish services at Twin Falls Clinic and expand services at the Burley Dental Clinic;
- Dirne Community Health Center in Coeur d'Alene received \$193,000 to purchase dental equipment to relocate and expand the dental clinic from three to six dental stations;
- Upper Valley Community Health Services in St. Anthony was awarded \$175,000 to purchase dental equipment needed for initial oral health services at new facility in St. Anthony;
- Benewah Medical Center in Plummer received \$152,000 to purchase a digital dental x-ray system and train personnel in its use;
- Terry Reilly Health Services received \$130,000 to purchase dental equipment and office furnishings to expand its Boise dental practice from four to six dental stations;
- Health West, received \$129,000 to expand Pocatello Clinic by adding a new exam room and nursing/provider work area and support the implementation of E-Prescribing and an electronic medical record; and
- Glenns Ferry Health Center was awarded \$24,400 to upgrade panoramic dental x-ray to digital imaging.

(more)

Community Health Centers are governed by a community based board and provide comprehensive primary and preventative medical services, and provide or make referrals for dental and mental health services. The Centers provide outpatient services to persons who are uninsured or on Medicaid coverage without regard to a person's ability to pay, and utilize a sliding fee schedule based upon income and family size for payment.

A total of 11 Idaho Community Health Centers applied for the grants in 2008.

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(Editors: For more information please contact Mary Sheridan at (208) 334-0669)



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